

**2 August** The *Australasian Chronicle* was first published in Sydney, edited by William Augustine Duncan. It was Australia's first Catholic newspaper. In 1843 its title was changed to *Morning Chronicle* and in 1846 it became the *Sydney Chronicle*.

**5 September** Port Darwin was discovered and named by Lieut John Lort Stokes and Capt J.C. Wickham during a survey of the northern Australian waters aboard HMS *Beagle*.

**30 September** Charles Joseph La Trobe arrived in Melbourne as superintendent of the Port Phillip district. He was responsible to Gipps.

**8 October** In NSW the legislative council passed an act to allow Aborigines in NSW to give evidence in criminal courts. As they allegedly possessed no belief in an afterlife, the compulsory oath on the Bible was replaced by a declaration to tell the truth. The legislation was later found to be repugnant to British law and was disallowed.

**27 October** The first immigrant ship to sail from Britain direct to Port Phillip, the *David Clarke*, arrived with 219 immigrants from Greenock, Scotland. All immediately received offers of employment.

**1839** David Lennox completed a bridge over the Parramatta River.

## 1840

**3 January** The first edition of the *Port Phillip Herald* appeared. In 1849 it became the *Melbourne Morning Herald* and, in 1869, as a daily evening broadsheet, the *Herald*.

**4 January** The Hunter River Steam Navigation Co was established. In December its ship the *Clonmel* was the first steamer to arrive in Melbourne with mail from Sydney.

**January** The Australian Society of Compositors resolved to urge improvement in apprentice ratios, and the compositors of the *Sydney Herald* went on strike. The strike was broken by the use of convict compositors. Convict labour was also used later in the year to defeat a bakers' strike.

**January** John Campbell became the first grazier in what would be called Queensland, when he drove cattle from the Gwydir valley, NSW, to the Dumaresq River at Beebo. Patrick and Walter Leslie settled the Darling Downs in March.

**25 February** HMS *Buffalo* arrived in Sydney with political exiles from Canada, transported for rebelling against British rule. A total of 149 were transported to NSW and Van Diemen's Land between July 1839 and February 1840.

**6 March** Capt Alexander Maconochie took command of the penal settlement at Norfolk Island, where he applied theories of penology that were far ahead of his time. Emphasising rehabilitation rather than punishment, he established an elaborate system of rewards to encourage good behaviour and reform.

**12 March** Paul Edmund de Strzelecki, a Polish-born scientist and explorer, climbed Australia's highest mountain, which he named Mt Kosciusko after the Polish democratic leader Tadeusz Kosciusko. He then pushed on into the Port Phillip district and after great difficulties reached Westernport Bay. He had traversed Gippsland, which he named but which Angus McMillan had explored the previous year.

**18 March** The Royal Hotel and Theatre in Sydney was destroyed by fire.

**31 May** The secretary of state, Lord John Russell, ordered Gov Gipps to divide NSW into two districts for the purposes of crown lands disposal. The Middle District was to centre on Sydney and the Southern District on Port Phillip. He also foreshadowed the creation of a Northern District.

**18 June** Edward John Eyre headed north from Adelaide to investigate the region to the east of Lake Torrens, unexplored by Europeans. Failing in his early attempts, he decided to make an east-west crossing to King George Sound.

**1 August** Transportation to NSW officially ended after an order-in-council was issued in London on 22 May. The last convicts arrived from England on the *Eden* on 18 November. Convicts were still to be sent to Van Diemen's Land and Norfolk Island.

**4 August** Tailors in Sydney and carpenters and joiners in Melbourne struck for higher wages.

**16 August** The *Perth Inquirer*, a weekly newspaper, was established.

**August** Adelaide's municipal corporation was established. It was the first municipal body in Australia and thus the first official institution whose members were elected rather than nominated by the crown.

**28 September** Artisans met in Sydney to protest against injustices in the bill for a new masters and servants act. The bill was intended to end recent unrest among workers. A petition against the bill signed by 2856 people was submitted to the legislative council, but the bill was enacted on 20 October.

**1 October** The *Sydney Herald* became a daily newspaper, having previously been published three times a week.

**21 November** The *Geelong Advertiser*, the Port Phillip district's first rural and first morning newspaper, began publication.

**1 December** The first of 36 quarterly parts of John Gould's folio *The birds of Australia* was published in London. Gould, who had travelled extensively in southeastern Australia, described 300 new species from the region.

**30 December** A meeting to inaugurate the movement for separation of the Port Phillip district from NSW was held in a Melbourne store.

**December** The first camels to reach Australia were landed in Hobart.

**1840** All the colonies suffered depressed economic conditions. The causes differed from colony to colony



and included drought, overspeculation in land, weakening overseas markets for wool, an influx of immigrants and, in NSW, the disruption to labour markets caused by the end of transportation.

**1840** A schism in the Presbyterian Church ended when the rival presbytery and synod of the church in NSW joined to form the Synod of Australia. Presbyterianism continued to be riven by schisms, however, and by 1855 there were four Presbyterian denominations in NSW.

## 1841

**2 February** John Fairfax and Charles Kemp bought the *Sydney Herald*.

**25 February** Edward John Eyre left Fowlers Bay, SA, to attempt an east–west crossing to King George Sound with only his overseer John Baxter and three Aborigines. On 29 April two of the Aborigines mur-

dered Baxter and took most of the supplies. Eyre pressed on with the remaining Aborigine, Wylie. A meeting with a whaler on the coast east of Esperance enabled them to replenish their desperately low food supply. The two men reached Albany on 7 July.

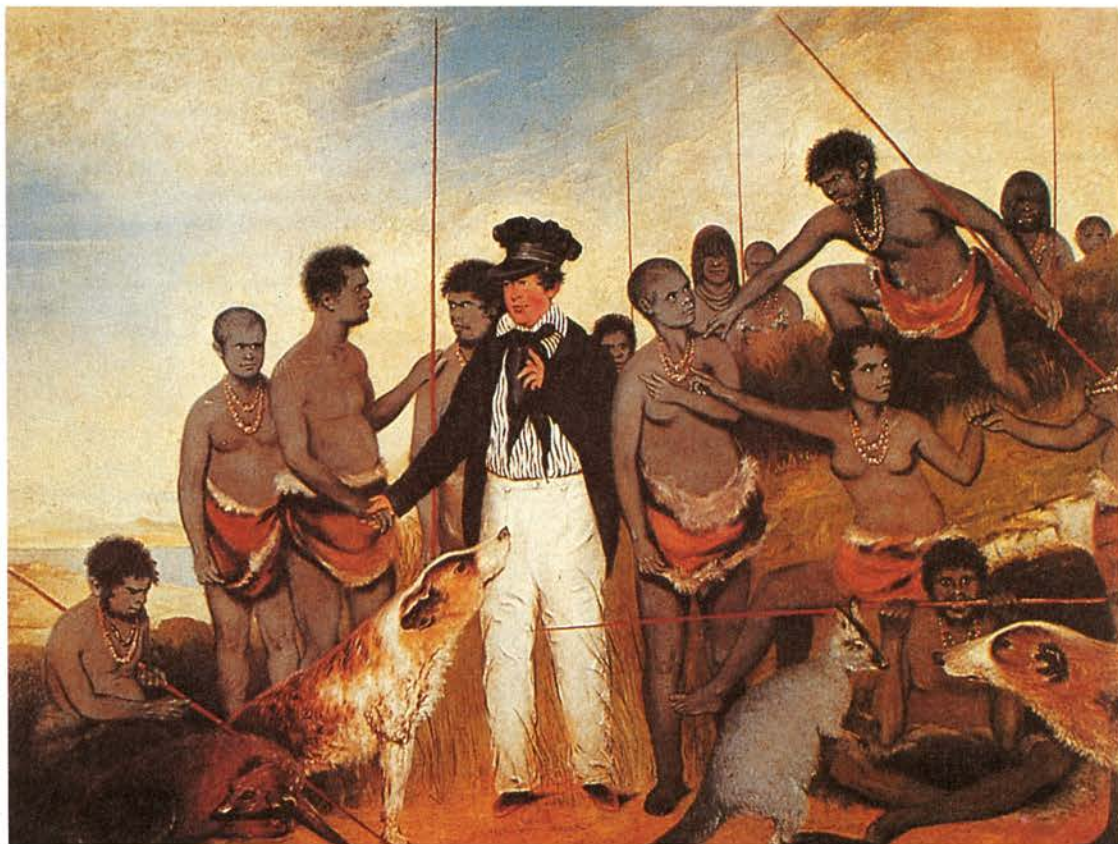
**9 March** The first resident Methodist minister in Melbourne, Rev Samuel Wilkinson, arrived from Sydney. A chapel built in Collins St was opened on 24 June.

**March** A meeting of Melbourne's influential citizens decided to establish a general hospital in Melbourne. A cottage was rented in Little Collins St.

**March** Silver–lead ore was found at Glen Osmond, SA.

**7 April** Isaac Nathan, the first musician with a European reputation to settle in Australia, arrived in Sydney and later opened an academy of singing.

**3 May** New Zealand was proclaimed a colony independent of NSW.



**1840** In Hobart Benjamin Dutterau completed *The Conciliation*, a large oil painting commemorating George Augustus Robinson's 'protectorship' of the Tasmanian Aborigines. Dutterau, a great admirer of Robinson's enterprise (which led ultimately to the removal of the last remaining Aborigines to Flinders Island), had previously published a number of etchings on the same theme. This painting, certainly his best-known work, was the first history painting done in Australia — the first to consciously depict a specific historical event in the grand manner. Oil by Benjamin Dutterau, 1840.

TASMANIAN MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY



**15 May** Capt George Grey became governor of SA at the age of twenty-nine.

**24 May** Gas lighting was used for the first time in Sydney.

**7 June** Sydney's new gaol at Darlinghurst took in its first prisoners.

**1 July** The convict assignment system was abolished in NSW and Van Diemen's Land. It was replaced in Van Diemen's Land by the probation gang system, which ensured that after two years' work in a labour gang well-behaved convicts received 'probation passages' making them eligible to work for wages.

**21 August** The Sydney Female Refuge was established by an artisan, Philip Chapman, in premises near the present Central railway station made available by the government.

**1 September** The Port Phillip Savings Bank was established.

**24 September** In response to the depressed economic conditions, Gov Gipps issued regulations designed to cut expenditure on education.

**23 October** Caroline Chisholm, a Catholic philanthropist and the wife of an army captain, established the Female Immigrants' Home to help unemployed new arrivals. She took groups of women to country areas where there was a shortage of labour.

**1841** William Bland published his *Paper on the present epidemic scarlatina*, a report on the first scarlet fever epidemic in NSW. It is thought to be Australia's earliest contribution to clinical medicine.

**1841** The colonial botanist of WA, James Drummond, proved that certain plants had been the principal cause of high sheep mortality rates in the past. This discovery enabled shepherds to keep flocks away from contaminated areas.

**1841** *A mother's offering to her children*, by 'a lady long resident in New South Wales', was published in Sydney. It was the first Australian book for children.



**7 July 1841** *The Aborigine Wylie, with Edward John Eyre, is greeted by his family and friends, having finally arrived at King George Sound, Western Australia, after a disastrous year-long journey from Adelaide. The horses had in fact been abandoned earlier. Engraved after J. Neil in Eyre's Journals.*

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## 1842

**20 January** Two Aborigines were hanged in Melbourne for the murder of two sealers at Western Port in October 1841. The jury, taking account of the previous good characters of the accused and of evidence that the sealers had injured them before the incident, recommended leniency. Despite public support for the recommendation, the judge and the executive council of NSW decided that the law should take its course.

**6 February** Censured for being absent from his pulpit while fund-raising in Melbourne, Rev John Dunmore Lang denounced the Presbyterian Synod of Australia for having turned the church into a 'synagogue of Satan'. He and his congregation at Scots Church, Sydney, renounced all connection with the synod.

**8 February** The secretary of state, Lord Stanley, ordered the suspension of the bounty system of emigration to NSW. It was resumed on a smaller scale in 1843 but in 1845 it was again suspended.

**14 February** Friedrich Wilhelm Ludwig Leichhardt arrived in Sydney from London. He spent the next two years in solitary biological excursions in the Sydney district.

**23 February** Melbourne's first theatre, the Royal Pavilion Saloon, later known as the Theatre Royal, opened with performances of *The widow's victim* and *Rob Roy*, by George Buckingham's amateur group.

**24 February** Twenty-five Aborigines from western and central Gippsland were enlisted at a depot at Narre Warren to be trained for mounted police duty. They were commanded by Henry Dana.

**1 March** The Australasian Sugar Co was established. It was renamed the Colonial Sugar Refining Co in 1855. Manufacturing took place at Canterbury near Sydney.

**March** Sydney was made a metropolitan and archiepiscopal see of the Catholic Church. Adelaide and Hobart were separated from the original vicariate and made episcopal sees. On 9 April John Bede Polding became the first archbishop.

**4 May** The Moreton Bay district was officially opened to settlement.

**21 June** The *Governor Phillip*, the Norfolk Island supply vessel, was seized by its crew, twelve convicts of that settlement. The captain and some soldiers managed to retake the ship but one soldier and five convicts were killed and several on both sides wounded. The surviving crew members were later tried and four were executed.

**June** James Davis, a convict who had escaped fourteen years previously from the Moreton Bay settlement with a companion, was brought in from the bush, where he had been living with the Aborigines. His companion had been killed by Aborigines for desecrating the bones of their dead.

**18 July** Benjamin Boyd, a ship owner and entrepreneur, arrived at Port Jackson from England to supervise the establishment of a coastal steamship ser-





**20 January 1842** Melbourne citizens turn out to watch the hanging of two Aborigines, Bob and Jack, for murder. It was Port Phillip's first execution. W.F.E. Liardet, the painter, was present at the hanging, although he probably did not produce the watercolour until 1875.

LA TROBE LIBRARY

vice. The enterprise was financed by the Royal Bank of Australia. He chose Twofold Bay, NSW, as a coastal base through which to ship livestock, wool and tallow from the Monaro hinterland.

**29 July** The British parliament passed the NSW Constitution Act which granted a partially elected legislature to the colony. The new legislative council was to comprise 24 members elected on a restricted franchise, and 12 crown nominees. The governor retained executive power.

**30 July** The South Australian Government Act abolished the existing mode of government in which authority was shared by the governor and the resident commissioner. It vested authority in the governor and a legislative council of at least seven members, to be nominated by the crown. The crown was empowered to introduce, when the colony's wealth and population justified it, a general assembly to be elected by the freeholders and to act either in conjunction with the legislative council or as a single chamber.

**1 August** The *Sydney Herald* became the *Sydney Morning Herald*.

**21 August** Francis Nixon was appointed the first Church of England Bishop of Van Diemen's Land. In July 1843 he arrived at Hobart.

**24 September** Regulations were issued in NSW for grants-in-aid to all schools, regardless of denomination, on a scale determined by the number of poor children enrolled.

**September** Capt Bagot and Francis Dutton separately found rich deposits of copper ore at Kapunda, SA. A mine opened in 1844.

**1842** Owing to the depression and the unsatisfactory quality of immigrants to Van Diemen's Land, assisted immigration was suspended at the request of the government. It was not resumed until 1848–49.

**1842** By acts of the Legislative Council of NSW, Sydney was incorporated as a city and Melbourne as a town.

## 1843

**March** The Bank of Australia collapsed. This was the most serious of several bank failures during the depression of the early 1840s.

**March** George Coppin, a founder of Australian theatre, arrived in Sydney from Adelaide. Soon he embarked on a successful season at the Royal Victoria Theatre.

**3 April** The *Launceston Courier* was replaced by the *Teetotal Advocate*, 'a permanent advocate for the cause of teetotalism'. Publication ceased on 30 December.

**5 April** The Australian Mutual Protection Association was formed in Sydney to try to improve the conditions of the working class, to secure 'the return of fit and proper persons to represent them in the City and Legislative Councils' and to encourage 'manufactures'.

**15 June** Membership of the legislative council in SA was increased. It now comprised the governor, three official members and four non-official members nominated by the crown.

**June–July** In NSW a general election for the legislative council was held. It was the first election for an Australian legislature.

**21 July** Confronted with low sheep prices during the depression, Henry O'Brien of Yass boiled down 400 sheep for the sale of tallow after experimental trials in June. The manufacture of tallow gave sheep a new commercial value.

**July** The British parliament authorised colonial governors to approve legislation accepting the evidence of Aborigines in court. However, in NSW in 1844 the legislative council disallowed the appropriate legislation when it was put forward by the local government.

**9 August** Land was sold in Brisbane for the first time.

**12 August** The first mental health legislation in NSW, the Dangerous Lunatics Act, was passed, prompted





1843 William Charles Wentworth and William Bland campaigned on a single ticket for the legislative council in Sydney between 1843 and 1848. Embroidered silk election banner.

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by a successful action against the superintendent at Tarban Creek asylum for illegal confinement. The act formalised procedures of discharge and admission to protect asylums and staff from allegations of wrongful admission.

**17 August** Sir John Eardley-Wilmot arrived in Hobart and on 21 August replaced Sir John Franklin. Eardley-Wilmot was the first civilian governor of Van Diemen's Land.

**20 August** Sir John Franklin, lieutenant-governor of Van Diemen's Land, was censured and recalled after dismissing the colonial secretary, John Montagu, and depriving him of his position as director of probation. Montagu appealed successfully to the Colonial Office and was soon appointed colonial secretary at the Cape of Good Hope.

**29 August** The bushranger Martin Cash was captured in Hobart and later tried for shooting one of his pursuers. He was sentenced to death but was reprieved and sent to Norfolk Island prison, from which he was released on pardon in 1853.

**24 September** The evangelist John Wroe arrived in Sydney to visit the Christian Israelite congregations in NSW.

**September** Thomas Sutcliffe Mort established what became Australia's chief wool selling agency in Sydney.

**14 November** Elizabeth Weavers, whose husband was a Sydney coachbuilder, was appointed female trustee of the Christian Israelites in NSW. She was the first woman appointed to church office in Australia.

**November** John Ridley, a miller from SA, invented a machine that reaped, threshed and winnowed wheat simultaneously and which promised to reduce the requirement for labour at a time of acute labour shortage. Within six years more than 50 were in operation in SA and others had been exported.

**13 December** John Brady, the first Catholic priest in WA, arrived in Perth. He was made bishop in 1845.

The first Church of England bishop, Mathew Blagden Hale, was not appointed until 1856.

**December** J. Hanly and W. McGinty were the first Catholic priests to arrive in Brisbane.

**1843** The Lien on Wool and Livestock Act was passed in NSW, enabling woolgrowers to borrow money on the security of their livestock or future wool clip. The act helped ease the effect of the depression on graziers.

**1843** The first export of mineral ore from Australia was made when ten tonnes of silver-lead ore were sent from Glen Osmond, SA, to England.

**1843** Philip Oaker of Launceston received in a pot from England what was probably Australia's first blackberry plant. His gardener provided the landowner James Fenton with three cuttings, 'as they might fail to strike root', Fenton later recalled.

**1843** Coal was mined for the first time in Van Diemen's Land at Colebrook.

## 1844

**1 January** The first peal of bells in Australia issued from St Mary's Catholic Cathedral in Sydney.

**1 January** An angry mob gathered at Hyde Park in Sydney, hurling abuse at Gov Gipps and protesting against unemployment. The government responded by authorising various forms of relief, including an employment registry at the immigration office.

**7 February** Brev-Maj Joseph Childs relieved Alexander Maconochie of his command at Norfolk Island. Maconochie's experiment in penal reform was deemed a failure because, according to the secretary of state, Lord Stanley, it diminished the dread of transportation and was too expensive.

**13 February** John Knatchbull, the fifth son of an English baronet, was hanged at Darlinghurst gaol, Sydney, for the murder of Ellen Jamieson, whom he had robbed and bludgeoned to death. His attorney, Robert Lowe, had defended him on the grounds of moral insanity, the first time such a plea had been made in a British court.

**April-May** In NSW Gipps made public two sets of regulations intended to remodel the squatting system and increase land revenue. The first, gazetted on 2 April, permitted squatters to occupy runs on payment of £10 for every 20 square miles (52 square kilometres). The second, announced (but not promulgated) on 13 May, allowed them after five years' occupancy to purchase 320 acres (129.6 hectares) of a run and gave purchasers security of tenure over a whole run for another eight years.

**2 April** Australia's first permanent synagogue opened in York St, Sydney. Others were opened at Hobart in 1843, Launceston in 1844, Melbourne in 1848, Adelaide in 1850 and Brisbane in 1886.

**9 April** More than 150 squatters gathered at the Royal Hotel in Sydney to object to Gipps's squatting regulations of 2 April. Protesting against 'taxation without



representation', they drafted a petition to the Queen and the imperial parliament and formed the Pastoral Association of NSW. This formalised the identity of the squatters as a political group.

**11 May** Robert Willson, the first Catholic bishop of Hobart, arrived in Van Diemen's Land.

**May** The Perth *Inquirer* reported that prices in WA had fallen by 50 per cent since 1838 and that wages and rents had fallen by at least 25 per cent.

**1 June** A Melbourne meeting of Port Phillip squatters formed the Mutual Protection Society and passed resolutions critical of Gipps's squatting regulations.

**11 July** The owners of the *Australian* published the *Hawkesbury Courier*, establishing the first newspaper 'chain' in Australia.

**15 August** Capt Charles Sturt left Adelaide to explore the interior. The party travelled along the Murray and Darling rivers, then to the district of Menindee. They then moved in a northwesterly direction to Fort Grey and back to Cooper Creek. The party suffered great hardships because of drought and eventually returned to Adelaide on 19 January 1846. Sturt was disappointed with the results of the expedition, having failed to reach the centre of the continent, or to find an inland sea or country suitable for grazing.

**28 August** The report of the Select Committee on Education in NSW was tabled in the legislative council. It revealed that half the children aged four to fourteen in the colony were not receiving education. It recommended the introduction of the Irish system of education, which was non-denominational though based on Christian principles. The system allowed clergymen to visit schools and instruct members of their own churches. The committee also proposed that a central board should be appointed by the governor. Gipps rejected the committee's recommendations.

**28 August** Robert Lowe, since 1843 a leading crown nominee in the NSW legislature, resigned his seat,

claiming that he could no longer in conscience support Gipps's government.

**8 September** Archbishop John Bede Polding consecrated Francis Murphy Bishop of Adelaide in St Mary's Cathedral, Sydney, the first consecration of a bishop in Australia. It was followed by the first Catholic provincial synod held in Australia.

**29 September** Norfolk Island was removed from the control of NSW and annexed to Van Diemen's Land.

**September** The Royal Society of Van Diemen's Land for Horticulture, Botany and the Advancement of Science was founded. It was the first Royal Society to be established outside England and was a rival to the Tasmanian Society established by Sir John Franklin in 1837. In 1849 it merged with the Tasmanian Society and in 1855 became the Royal Society of Tasmania.

**1 October** Ludwig Leichhardt set out from Jimbour station on the Darling Downs, intending to reach Port Essington on the Coburg Peninsula, NT. Despite major setbacks, his expedition reached Port Essington on 17 December 1845. He had found large areas suitable for settlement and several major rivers.

**1844** Copper was found at Montacute near Adelaide by Thomas Burr, deputy surveyor-general of SA. Lead was found at Rapid Bay south of Adelaide. These and other mineral discoveries stimulated land speculation, which continued until 1846. However, owing to SA's labour shortage, large-scale mining operations were virtually impossible.

**1844** Louisa Ann Meredith's account of her first years in the colonies, *Notes and sketches of New South Wales*, was published.

**1844** For the first time in the history of NSW exports exceeded imports.

**1844** The first census of SA was conducted. The population was 17 366; Aborigines were not counted.



**May 1845** A 'bubble of copper' is discovered by a shepherd at Burra north of Adelaide. Within a year the South Australian Mining Association, together with a syndicate of Adelaide investors, constructed a mile and a half (about two kilometres) of underground galleries tapping the rich deposits of copper ore. Watercolour by S. T. Gill, 1847.

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## 1845

**6 January** John Skinner Prout promoted and helped organise Australia's first art exhibition, held in Hobart's legislative council chamber.

**18 February** A small experimental cargo of sandalwood and other colonial produce was exported to Bombay from WA. The sale of sandalwood at a high profit encouraged many landowners to begin exporting it from their properties. Trading was brisk until 1848 when overseas prices fell and readily accessible stands were exhausted.

**May** Copper was discovered at Burra, north of Adelaide. A cluster of six towns, collectively known as 'the Burra', was established around the mines opened there. The mines closed in 1877, but open-cut mining operations recommenced in 1971.

**23 July** In WA the legislative council voted against bringing convict labour to the colony.

**4 August** The barque *Cataraqui* with 370 emigrants and 46 crew bound for Melbourne, struck the south-west coast of King Island in Bass Strait, killing all but nine. This made it the worst disaster in Australian maritime history.

**25 October** Brev-Maj Frederick Holt Robe succeeded Capt George Grey as governor of SA.

**31 October** In protest at Lieut-Gov Eardley-Wilmot's proposal to increase taxes to cover the costs of transporting convicts to Van Diemen's Land, six members

of the council — the 'patriotic six' — walked out. The governor had difficulty in finding replacements.

**12 November** The Masters and Servants Act in NSW was extended to include itinerant bush workers such as shearers.

**4 December** Perth was visited by HMS *Driver*, a ship powered by steam as well as sail. Its appearance was so unexpected that the lookout on the shore mistook it for a sailing ship on fire.

**15 December** An expedition led by the surveyor-general of NSW, Sir Thomas Mitchell, with Edmund Kennedy as second-in-command, left Boree station, NSW, in search of an overland route to Port Essington on the Coburg Peninsula, NT. On 18 April 1846 Mitchell learned that Ludwig Leichhardt had already successfully completed an overland journey to Port Essington. Mitchell therefore decided to search for the watershed supposed to exist between the eastern rivers and the Gulf of Carpentaria. Although he failed to find one, he did chart an extensive area of unknown land, opening the way for the graziers who followed.

**31 December** The novel *Ralph Rashleigh or the life of an exile* by 'Giacomo de Rosenberg' was published. Though sometimes attributed to the convict James Tucker, its authorship is uncertain.

**1845** The percentage of convicts in the population of Van Diemen's Land was steadily increasing with the regular arrival of convict transports. To reduce convict numbers, ticket-of-leave holders were allowed to take employment in southern NSW.



**3 May 1845** Seven-year-old Sara Anne Lawson poses uncertainly for a photograph. This daguerrotype on silver by an unknown photographer is believed to be the earliest extant Australian photograph.

DIXSON GALLERIES

## 1846

**27 January** Lieut-Col Andrew Clarke succeeded John Hutt as governor of WA.

**29 January** A meeting was held in Sydney, with James Macarthur presiding, to discuss the establishment of a railway system in NSW. A committee of leading colonists was appointed to collect information on the subject and on 11 September the Great Southern and Western Railway Co, later called the Sydney Railway Co, was established.

**17 February** A British order-in-council was issued establishing a convict settlement north of the 26th parallel called 'North Australia'.

**1 March** The Spanish Benedictine monks Rosendo Salvado and Joseph Serra arrived in the Moore River area, WA, to bring Christianity to the Aborigines. In April 1847 the foundation stone of a monastery was laid at New Norcia, named after Norcia in Italy, the birthplace of St Benedict.

**30 April** The secretary of state, William Ewart Gladstone, asked Sir Charles FitzRoy, recently appointed to succeed Sir George Gipps as governor of NSW, to sound out colonial opinion regarding the renewal of transportation to NSW, suggesting that transportation would be resumed if the proposal was approved by the legislative council.





**September 1846** *S.T. Gill disconsolately awaits help outside John Horrocks' tent on Horrocks' ill-fated northwest expedition. The explorer lies inside the tent, dying of gangrene, after having been accidentally shot mounting a camel. Watercolour by S.T. Gill.*

ART GALLERY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

**30 April** Gladstone recalled Lieut-Gov Sir John Eardley-Wilmot from Van Diemen's Land, giving as the reason Eardley-Wilmot's mismanagement of the convict system. Simultaneously Gladstone wrote privately to the governor about rumours concerning his private life and alleged immoral behaviour. Wilmot was temporarily replaced by Charles Joseph La Trobe. A local committee of inquiry held at Wilmot's request reported inconclusively and he remained in the colony seeking more evidence in his defence until his death on 3 February 1847.

**2 June** The first issue of the *Melbourne Argus* appeared. In 1848 it became the *Argus*.

**17 June** A General Board of Education was established by the acting governor of WA, Lieut-Col Frederick Chidley Irwin, which proposed to open schools for all denominations, teaching general Christian principles.

**20 June** The first issue of the *Moreton Bay Courier* appeared. In 1861 it became the *Brisbane Courier*.

**1 July** Provoked by the seizure of their cooking utensils, the convicts of Norfolk Island revolted, murdering four officers; thirteen convicts were later hanged. In August Brev-Maj Joseph Childs was replaced by John Price.

**11 July** After more than eight years as governor of NSW, Sir George Gipps sailed from Sydney. He died soon after reaching England.

**17 July** In SA Lieut-Gov Robe announced to the legislative council that from the financial year of

1846–47 a sum was to be set aside in the estimates for religious and educational purposes. The decision split the community and generated such hostility to Robe that he applied for transfer.

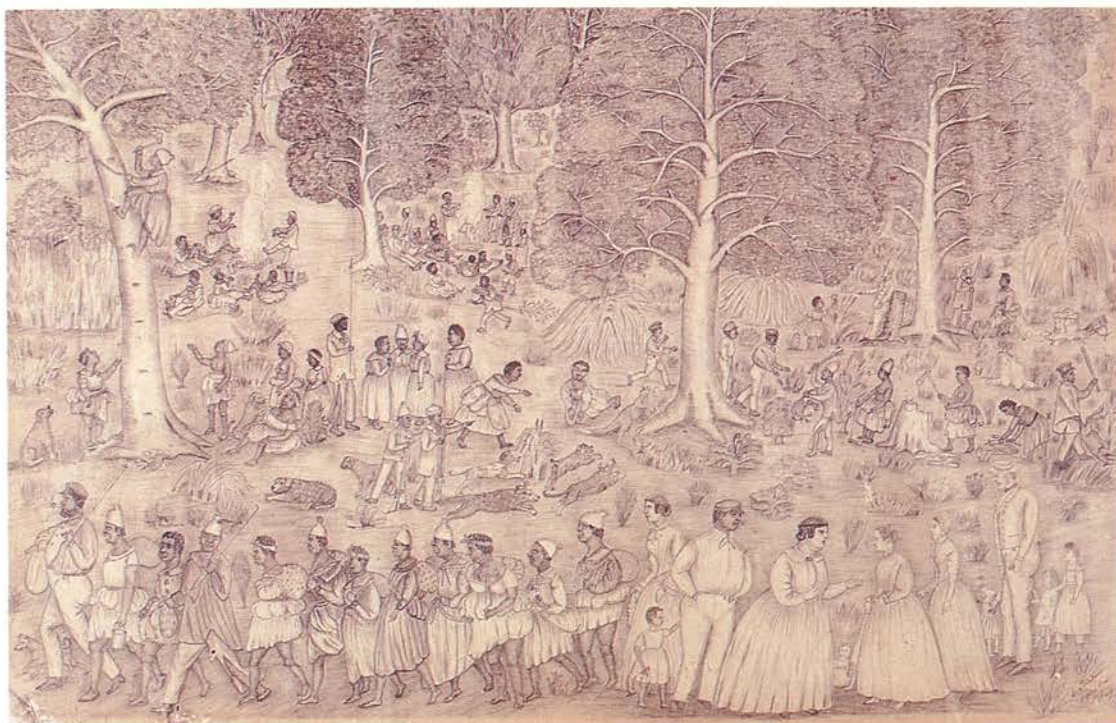
**29 July** An expedition under the command of John Ainsworth Horrocks left Penwortham, SA, hoping to discover useful pasturage in the north. At Lake Dutton it was cut short when Horrocks was accidentally shot when his gun discharged while he was mounting his camel. The expedition proved the usefulness of camels in the exploration of central Australia.

**3 August** Sir Charles Augustus FitzRoy became the tenth governor of NSW. He received commissions as captain-general and governor-in-chief of NSW, Van Diemen's Land, SA and their dependencies, governor-general of all Her Majesty's Australian possessions and governor and commander-in-chief over the new colony of North Australia. (The last commission was revoked when the colony failed in 1847.) The governor-generalship reflected the plans of the secretary of state, Earl Grey, for Australian federation, but it had no practical effect.

**7 August** Augustus Charles Gregory left Gomalling, WA, with his brothers Francis Thomas and Henry, in search of new grazing land. They reached the headwaters of the Irwin River, where they found coal seams. They returned on 22 September with news of new pastures.

**28 August** The imperial Waste Lands (Australia) Act (also known as the Australian Land Sales Act)





**October 1847** *Forty-seven Tasmanian Aborigines are removed from Flinders Island and returned to Van Diemen's Land. Their final reserve was Oyster Cove, about 40 kilometres south of Hobart, across the D'Entrecasteaux Channel from Bruny Island. They all died within 30 years. Pencil sketch of Aborigines and white settlers by A. Benbow, 1847.*

TASMANIAN MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY

received royal assent. It authorised the making of orders-in-council to regulate the leasing and alienation of crown land in NSW.

**30 September** Earl Grey promised that transportation to Van Diemen's Land would be suspended for two years because of overcrowding, breakdown in discipline and the lack of work for ticket-of-leave holders.

**31 October** A select committee of inquiry into the renewal of transportation, chaired by William Charles Wentworth, tabled its report in favour of renewal. Outside the legislature, opponents of transportation gathered widespread support for petitions to the secretary of state.

**24 November** Earl Grey instructed FitzRoy to send at least 900 men for active service in the war between Maoris and Europeans in New Zealand. Since NSW was not threatened by external or internal enemies, Grey concluded that a large military force was unnecessary and of more practical use in New Zealand.

**10 December** Ludwig Leichhardt left the Condamine River in Qld in an unsuccessful attempt to cross the continent from east to west.

**1846** Australia's first Church of Christ chapel was built in Adelaide.

**1846** The Lutheran Church, centred on SA, split into rival denominations which did not reunite until 1966.

## 1847

**8 January** The *Lord Auckland* sailed from Port Jackson to establish a convict settlement at Port Curtis (now Gladstone, Qld), arriving on 30 January. On 26 February, a second ship, the *Thomas Lowry*, made the journey. The decision by the secretary of state, Earl Grey, to abandon the settlement reached Port Curtis on 15 April, and the evacuation was completed by July.

**25 January** Sir William Denison took office as lieutenant-governor of Van Diemen's Land. He replaced the administrator, Charles Joseph La Trobe.

**January** Samuel Thomas Gill's drawings of the Horrocks expedition were raffled in Adelaide. Some of his other works formed the principal attractions at an exhibition that opened on 3 February.

**12 February** Lieut-Col Frederick Chidley Irwin became acting governor of WA after the death of Gov Andrew Clarke on the previous day.

**9 March** A British order-in-council, authorised by the Waste Lands (Australia) Act of August 1846, granted crown land leases of up to fourteen years, right of purchase for leaseholders and compensation for improvements. These concessions met the squatters' most pressing demands.



**13 March** Edmund Kennedy left Sydney to trace the Victoria (now Barcoo) River to its source, which Sir Thomas Mitchell, its discoverer, suspected to be the Gulf of Carpentaria. In fact, Kennedy found the Victoria River became part of Cooper Creek.

**22 March** The 'patriotic six', who had resigned from the Legislative Council of Van Diemen's Land in 1844, were reinstated.

**17 April** In Sydney William Baker began publishing the weekly magazine *Heads of the people, an illustrated journal of literature, whims and oddities*, specialising in satirical commentary upon colonial society.

**April** The York Agricultural Society in WA, representing sheep graziers in the locality, requested the transportation of convicts to relieve the acute labour shortage and improve conditions in the colony. The group included some of the wealthiest men in the colony.

**6 May** An anti-transportation meeting was held at Hobart and a petition was subsequently sent to the Queen.

**24 May** Ludwig Leichhardt was presented with the Patron's Medal from the Royal Geographical Society in recognition of his explorations in Australia.

**May** *Don John of Austria* by Isaac Nathan, the first opera written, composed and produced in Australia, was performed at the Victoria Theatre in Sydney.

**3 June** The House of Commons received a petition from 2772 citizens of Maitland and the Hunter valley district, NSW, opposing the renewal of transportation. On 3 July another was received from 650 citizens of Launceston and on 17 December another from 122 'substantial citizens' of NSW.

**9 June** It was reported in the local press that Dr William Pugh of Launceston had made the first surgical use of ether anaesthesia in Australia.

**29 June** The first Church of England bishops of Melbourne, Adelaide and Newcastle (Charles Perry, Augustus Short and William Tyrrell) were consecrated in Westminster Abbey.

**9 July** James Alipius Goold was appointed Melbourne's first Catholic bishop. He was consecrated on 6 August 1848 in St Mary's Cathedral, Sydney.

**31 July** The secretary of state, Earl Grey, informed Gov FitzRoy of a plan to set up a central authority in the colonies to decide on matters of common concern, namely communications, ports and customs, after the intended separation of the Port Phillip district from NSW.

**July** A Board of Education was established in SA to superintend schools receiving state aid.

**30 August** Earl Grey informed FitzRoy that he would send out 5000 adults without delay to ease the labour shortage in NSW. The demand for labour was pressing, and the colony accepted readily.

**September** Earl Grey wrote to FitzRoy suggesting the transportation to NSW of 'exiles', prisoners who had already served parts of their terms in British

gaols. Free emigrants in numbers equal to the convicts would also be sent to maintain the balance of free men and convicts in the colony's population.

**3 October** Forty-seven Tasmanian Aborigines were relocated at Oyster Bay in Van Diemen's Land from Flinders Island, on the grounds that the distance from Flinders Island had contributed to the oppression of the Aborigines and weakened control over their central guardians.

**30 November** The *Colonial Times* reported that several evenings in the previous week had been disrupted by riots in the principal thoroughfares of Hobart. About two hundred people, the majority of whom were members of the Society of United Tailors, harassed a worker on his way home for taking lower wages than those fixed by the society.

**1847** The philanthropist Caroline Chisholm published *Emigration and transportation relatively considered: a pamphlet letter to Earl Grey*, which opposed transportation, and *Comfort for the poor! Meat three times a day!! Voluntary information from the people of New South Wales*, which advocated a systematic immigration system, and contained accounts of the benefits of emigrating to Australia.

**1847** George French Angas published *Savage life and scenes in Australia and New Zealand; being an artist's impression of countries and people in the Antipodes and South Australia illustrated*.



**May–June 1848** Thomas Henry Huxley, surgeon and naturalist of HMS *Rattlesnake*, on preliminary reconnaissance with Edmund Kennedy at Rockingham Bay, Western Australia. Huxley wanted to accompany Kennedy's expedition but was forbidden to do so by Captain Stanley, an order that probably saved his life. Tinted lithograph after T.H. Huxley, 1852.

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## 1848

**6 January** The weekly newspaper *Die Deutsche Post für die Australischen Kolonien* (the German-Australian Post) was published in Adelaide. It was Australia's first foreign-language newspaper.

**January** Denominational schools boards were established in NSW and Port Phillip, providing for a dual system of education.

**February** In SA a Destitute Board was established to care for the welfare of immigrants.

**23 March** Ludwig Leichhardt set out from the Condamine River, Qld, in a second attempt to cross the continent from east to west. After leaving Cogoon station on 4 April, he and his entire party disappeared. Numerous expeditions organised to find them were unsuccessful, but some proved of value in gathering geographical information.

**1 April** Gov FitzRoy wrote to the secretary of state, Earl Grey, that NSW was strongly in favour of the 'exile' system of transportation so long as convicts sent were indeed accompanied by equal numbers of free emigrants.

**28 April** Edmund Kennedy left Sydney by sea, planning to land at Rockingham Bay, Qld, traverse Cape York Peninsula along the east coast to its most northerly point, where supplies would be replenished from a ship waiting in Albany Passage, traverse the west coast southwards to link with the recent discoveries of Mitchell and Leichhardt and then return to Sydney. After landing on 24 May, he made little progress, hemmed in by mangrove swamps and mountains. On 13 November he left eight of his thirteen men at Weymouth Bay while he and the others went to the ship for help. After one of the advance party was accidentally shot, Kennedy and Jacky Jacky, an Aborigine, went on alone. In early December they were attacked by Aborigines and Kennedy was killed. Jacky Jacky reached the ship on 23 December. Only two other members of the party survived.

**26 June** The Poor Law commissioners in England approved a scheme of pauper immigration involving female orphans from the English workhouses. The scheme was suspended in 1850 after complaints from NSW and the Port Phillip district that the immigrants chosen were generally unsuitable.

**1 July** Robert Lowe, a leading liberal and protagonist in the struggle for self-government, was elected to one of the Sydney seats of the NSW legislative council. Henry Parkes, one of his supporters, later described the event as 'the birthday of Australian Democracy'.

**25 July** To press their case for a separate colony, voters in the Port Phillip district elected Earl Grey to represent the seat of Melbourne in the NSW legislature.

**2 August** Sir Henry Edward Fox Young became the first civilian lieutenant-governor of SA, succeeding Lieut-Col Frederick Holt Robe.

**12 August** Capt Charles Fitzgerald took up his appointment as lieutenant-governor of WA, succeeding Lieut-Col Frederick Chidley Irwin.

**4 September** A British order-in-council named NSW, Norfolk Island, Van Diemen's Land and the Cape Colony, southern Africa, as places to which convicts might be sent. It revoked an 1840 order-in-council that had abolished transportation to NSW, and enabled the new scheme of 'exile' transportation to commence.

**9 September** Augustus Charles Gregory led an expedition north from Toodyay, WA, to find new pasture land. The party reached the Murchison River, and returned to Perth on 12 November, having found some useful grazing land as well as lead ore on the Murchison.

**14 September** John Septimus Roe left York, WA, to open up the still largely unexplored area between Perth and Esperance Bay. He explored southward from York to the Pallinup River and east to the Russell Range, returning to Perth via Bunbury on 2 February 1849. He discovered good grazing land and coal deposits.

**September** The *Fortitude* set sail for the colonies with emigrants chosen by Rev John Dunmore Lang. His purpose was to establish a Protestant peasantry in Australia and ease the plight of the poor in English industrial cities.

**2 October** Australia's first evening daily, the *Daily News and Evening Chronicle*, was published in Sydney. The last issue appeared on 29 November.

**27 October** After an insurrection in Ireland, seven leaders of the Young Ireland Party were transported to Van Diemen's Land. All were offered tickets of leave if they signed a parole, which all but one accepted. Three escaped to America but the others remained and received conditional pardons in June 1854. Later the pardons were made unconditional.

**2 December** Francis Cunningham and Edward John Hawksley published the *People's Advocate and New South Wales Vindicator* in Sydney. They proclaimed it as a working man's paper.

**15 December** Trustees and directors of a new insurance company, the Australian Mutual Provident Society, were appointed in Sydney.

**1848** The first detachment of the native police force of Qld transferred from NSW to the Condamine district under Lieut Frederick Walker. Like the native police forces of Vic and NSW, they were employed to subdue hostile Aborigines. The force was later disbanded, revived in 1857 and disbanded again in 1899.

**1848** HMS *Rattlesnake*, captained by Owen Stanley, surveyed Australian waters to the north and north-east.

**1848** William Tipple Smith showed the colonial secretary of NSW a specimen of gold. He did not reveal the site of the discovery, which was later learned to be Yorky's Corner near Bathurst.





25 May 1848 Owen Stanley, commander of HMS Rattlesnake, with Edmund Kennedy at Rockingham Bay, on the first leg of Kennedy's exploration expedition to Cape York. Most of the party died, including Kennedy. Watercolour painted in 1848 by Owen Stanley, who accompanied Kennedy's party in his ship as far as Rockingham Bay, and who identified the figures (from left to right) as 'Goddard, one of the men who was saved, Captain Stanley, Mr Kennedy and Wall the Naturalist'.

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**1848** The first iron ore was smelted at Mittagong, NSW, at the FitzRoy Ironworks.

**1848** WA's first official census was conducted, showing a non-Aboriginal population of 11 976.

**1848** The final part of John Gould's seven-volume *The birds of Australia* was published.

## 1849

**January** More than a thousand grams of gold was found by a boy named Chapman at Glenmona station, 160 kilometres northwest of Melbourne. News of the discovery soon spread. Men gathered at the site with tools but were dispersed by troopers.

**20 April** Gov Fitzgerald of WA reported to the secretary of state, Earl Grey, that he had included in the estimates a grant for the maintenance of Catholic schools in proportion to their numbers as they were proving beneficial to the community. He thus anticipated the separation of the Catholic and national systems by more than 20 years.

**1 May** A British order-in-council made WA a place to which convicts could be sent.

**28 May** John Kinchela and George William Rusden were appointed as agents to advertise the newly established national education system throughout NSW, to assist in the establishment of schools and to exercise some functions as inspectors.

**11 June** The *Hashemy* arrived in Sydney with the first convicts to be sent to NSW under the 'exile' system of transportation, which entailed sending equal numbers

of free migrants and convicts. The *Hashemy* did not bring the promised free migrants. Anti-transportation meetings in Sydney strongly protested against the renewal of transportation to NSW. When the *Randolph* arrived in Melbourne on 8 August with the next shipment, the strong public protest there persuaded Lieut-Gov La Trobe to send the vessel on to Sydney. Three more ships, the *Mount Stewart Elphinstone*, *Haverling* and *Adelaide* subsequently arrived. Despite the protests, most of the convicts were landed at Sydney, the others at Moreton Bay.

**August** Caroline Chisholm formed the Family Colonization Loan Society with branch committees throughout the British Isles and agents in Adelaide, Melbourne and Sydney. The society received the savings of prospective emigrants or their colonial relatives and lent them the balance of their passage money. Australian agents found them employment and collected repayments for loans in easy instalments.

**10 October** The Sydney Railway Co started work on the first railway in NSW, to link Sydney and Goulburn.

**31 October** The first direct shipment of convicts under the 'exile' system to Moreton Bay arrived aboard the *Mount Stuart Elphinstone*.

**30 November** The settlement at Port Essington on the Coburg Peninsula, NT, was abandoned.

**31 December** The Port Phillip Aboriginal Protectorate was abolished on the recommendation of a select committee established by the Legislative Council of NSW. It opposed the protectorate on the grounds of cost and because the restriction it imposed on settlers 'interfered with good feeling' between Europeans and



Aborigines. Rations were to be issued only in emergencies and the native police were expanded as a 'civilising influence'.

**1849** S.T. Gill produced a series of 22 lithographs of prominent SA citizens called 'Heads of the People'.

## 1850

**1 January** NSW began producing the first adhesive postage stamps, to the value of 1d, 2d and 3d, known as the 'Sydney Views' series. Vic produced adhesive stamps to the same values on 3 January, depicting Queen Victoria.

**March** William Campbell found gold at Clunes, Vic, but concealed his discovery.

**April** Rev John Dunmore Lang and James Robert Wilshire established the Australian League to work for universal male suffrage, land reform, the abolition of transportation and the transformation of the Australian colonies into a 'Great Federal Republic'.

**13 May** The Supreme Court of NSW held its first session on circuit in Brisbane with Mr Justice Therry presiding.

**1 June** The *Scindian* arrived in WA with 75 convicts on board, the first to be transported to the colony. No prison had yet been built to house them, nor had a decision been made on how they would be occupied. Eventually they were sent to Fremantle. Capt E. Y. W. Henderson was appointed comptroller-general of the penal settlement there.

**2 August** Rev John Dunmore Lang was elected to the legislative council in NSW, chiefly as a result of electoral work on his behalf by Henry Parkes.

**5 August** The Australian Colonies Government Act received royal assent. Its purpose was to separate the Port Phillip district from NSW and so create the new colony of Victoria; to give Vic, Van Diemen's Land and SA legislatures comprising elected and nominated members; to permit the colonies to erect their own constitutions, with provisions for bicameral legislatures; and to authorise any two or more colonies to enter into a federal union.

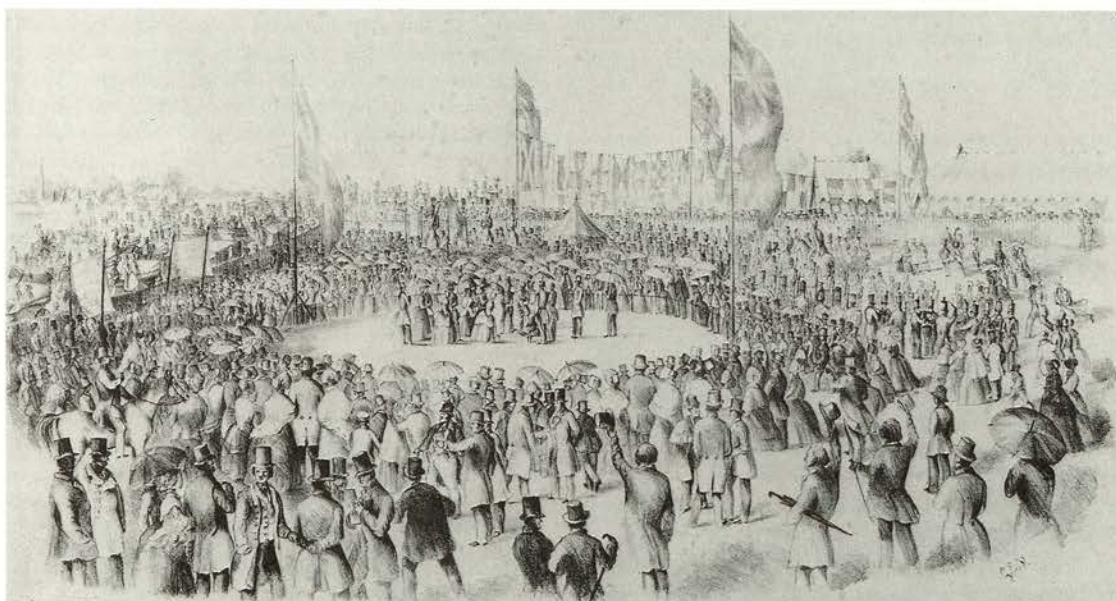
**16 September** A public meeting in Barrack Square, Sydney, established the Association for Preventing the Revival of Transportation.

**September** The first Australian branches of the Young Men's Christian Association were established in Adelaide and Kooronga, a copper mining town in SA. The YMCA's objective was the cultural, religious and social improvement of the people. Branches opened in Melbourne and Sydney in 1853 and in Hobart in 1854.

**1 October** The Act of Incorporation for the University of Sydney received Gov FitzRoy's assent. On 11 October 1852 the inaugural ceremony took place.

**1 October** The first Church of England bishops' conference was held in Sydney. The six bishops of Australasia attended.

**November** The first Vic trade union, the Stonemasons' Society, was formed.



**3 July 1850** Mrs Keith Stewart, a daughter of Governor FitzRoy of New South Wales, turns the first sod of the railway line that is to link Sydney and Goulburn. This was the first undertaking of the Sydney Railway Company, incorporated by an act of parliament the previous year. Lithograph published by J. Allan, after George Peacock.

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**28 December** The first issue of the *Empire* was produced in Sydney. Its editor and proprietor was Henry Parkes.

**1850** The Australian Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Science, Commerce and Agriculture was founded in Sydney.

**1850** Measles was reported for the first time though it probably existed as early as the 1830s.

**1850** The first brick veneer structure in the world was completed by Peter Beveridge near Swan Hill, Vic. Beveridge fired his own bricks and covered his timber cottage, now the breakfast room at Tyntynder station.

## 1851

**1 January** The Australasian League for the Abolition of Transportation was formed in Melbourne to agitate for the end of convict transportation to Australia and the exclusion of emancipists from the Port Phillip district.

**13 January** FitzRoy received new commissions as governor of NSW, Van Diemen's Land, SA and Vic and as 'Governor General of all Her Majesty's Australian possessions, including the colony of Western Australia'. As their superior he had the right both to advise the lieutenant-governors and to assume the function of governor in all colonies except WA.

**6 February** One of Vic's most serious bushfires reached its peak raging from Barwon Heads, Vic, to Mount Gambier, SA. At least ten people died and there were huge stock losses.

**12 February** Edward Hammond Hargraves and John Lister found five specks of gold in Lewis Ponds Creek, NSW. On 7 April Lister and his partner, William Tom, found payable gold at Yorky's Corner. They alerted Hargraves, who announced the find to the press, named the goldfield Ophir and claimed for himself the reward for discovery.

**15 May** Thomas Icely, a squatter, counted over three hundred men at the Ophir goldfields. The gold rush had begun.

**22 May** The NSW government issued a proclamation declaring that all gold found in NSW was the property of the crown.

**23 May** FitzRoy announced that after the first day of June, no-one would be allowed to dig or search for gold without first obtaining a licence at 30s per month. A police magistrate, John Richard Hardy, was made the first gold commissioner. His job was to enforce the regulations.

**14 June** Gold was discovered in the valley of the Turon River, 50 kilometres north of Bathurst. The Turon diggings proved to be the richest in NSW.

**17 June** At a meeting at Ophir, NSW, 300 diggers protested against the high cost of the licence required to dig for gold.

**30 June** The Australasian Steam Navigation Co was founded to meet the demands of gold-rush traffic.



**5 May 1851** *Edward Hargraves, who claimed to be the first discoverer of gold in Australia, returning the salute of the goldminers at Ophir. Oil by T. T. Balcombe, 1851.*

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**June** Hargraves was paid £500 by the NSW government as the discoverer of gold in payable quantities. In October 1853 he received £10 000 and in 1877 a £250 annuity for life.

**1 July** The Port Phillip district of NSW was proclaimed as the separate colony of Victoria. The writs for the first elections of the legislative council were issued.

**2 July** Christopher Thomas Peters, a hutkeeper on Barkers' sheep station 65 kilometres north of Ballarat, found a large nugget of gold and quartz. Despite efforts to suppress news of the discovery, the Melbourne *Argus* soon announced it and by the end of the year a heavily populated goldfield was established there.

**5 July** James Esmond showed gold that he and his workmate James Pugh had found at Clunes, Vic, to Alfred Clarke, editor of the *Geelong Advertiser*. Clarke published the news on 22 July and a rush began. The discovery reversed the decline in Vic's population that the rush towards the NSW goldfields had begun.

**15 July** Charles Joseph La Trobe, formerly superintendent of the Port Phillip district, took the oath of office as lieutenant-governor of Vic.

**July** The first great 'nugget' — the Kerr Hundred-weight — was found near Louise Creek, NSW, about 80 kilometres north of Bathurst. This block of quartz and gold weighed 74.65 kilograms and contained 39.56 kilograms of gold.

**16 August** Lieut-Gov Joseph La Trobe of Vic announced that from 1 September no-one would be





**6 February 1851** One of Victoria's worst bushfires reached its height on 'Black Thursday', engulfing Dandenong, Mount Macedon and the whole country from Barwon Heads to Mount Gambier, South Australia.  
Oil by William Strutt, 1862–64.

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permitted to dig, search for or remove gold without first taking out a licence costing 30s per month.

**20 August** The new partly elective Legislative Council of SA was opened.

**26 August** Angry diggers held a meeting at Buninyong, Vic, to condemn the licence system. Similar meetings were held at most other goldfields.

**August** Returning from the Clunes diggings to Buninyong, James Regan found gold at what was to become known as Ballarat's Golden Point. With John Dunlop, he was the first to mine gold in the area; within months a goldfield was established there.

**27 September** The last duel in Australia was fought between Sir Thomas Livingstone Mitchell, the surveyor-general of NSW, and Stuart Alexander Donaldson, a merchant, over Donaldson's public complaint about the cost of the surveyor-general's department to the colony. After three shots had been exchanged, the seconds interfered and ended the duel.

**30 October** The first missionaries of the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints (Mormons) arrived in Sydney from the United States. By May 1853 there were Mormon missionaries in all colonies.

**8 November** Between two and three thousand gold-diggers met at Sofala, NSW, to demand reduction of the licence fee.

**11 November** The new, partly elective Legislative Council of Vic was opened.

**13 December** The Melbourne *Argus* broke the news of a gold strike at Bendigo, Vic.

## 1852

**1 January** The new, partly elective Legislative Council of Van Diemen's Land was opened.

**1 January** A new regulation doubling the miners' licence fee in Vic to 60s produced such strong protest that it was revoked within two weeks.

**2 January** The SA Education Act ended state aid to denominational schools.

**6 January** The Supreme Court of Vic was created by an act of the legislative council. On 24 January, William a'Beckett was appointed as the first chief justice.

**28 January** SA passed the Bullion Act to attract gold to the colony by offering a higher price than was available in Vic.

**25 June** The Murrumbidgee River flooded Gundagai, NSW, killing 89 of the population of 250. A new town was established on higher ground.

**28 July** The squatting interest, which held the balance of power in the legislative council in Vic, won a victory when John Pascoe Fawkner's motion to extend the bounds of 'settled' areas was defeated.

**July** In Vic the legislative council passed the Convicts Prevention Act to deter convicts and convicts with tickets of leave or conditional pardons from coming to Vic from Van Diemen's Land to join the gold rushes. The British government disallowed the act. Even before this news reached Melbourne it was learned that Britain had agreed to end transportation to eastern Australia, including Van Diemen's Land.

reflected the strength of British interest in Australia since the discovery of gold.

**1852** The English, Scottish and Australian Bank Ltd was formed.

## 1853

**5 January** William Carter became the first mayor of Hobart.

**22 January** An act for the establishment of the University of Melbourne received royal assent. On 13 April 1855 the first lectures were delivered.

**8 February** A peaceful demonstration was held at the Turon diggings in NSW, protesting against the mining licence. A delegation of four, supported by 800 fellow miners, turned themselves over to the gold commissioners for not having licences and incurred small fines, which were paid by the diggers' subscriptions.

**April** The government of Vic introduced uniform gold claims, limiting the amount of land for each claim to 144 square feet (13.3 square metres). The largest area a group could hold in one claim was 576 square feet (53.3 square metres).

**26 May** The last convict ship to Van Diemen's Land, the *St Vincent*, arrived in Hobart.

**6 June** The Anti-Gold Licence Association was formed in Vic. On 1 August Lieut-Gov La Trobe was presented with a petition of more than 5000 signatures from the association, condemning the licence fee and the squatters' monopoly of land. Its leaders went round the diggings asking for the miners' support. On 27 August a group of Bendigo diggers marched to the commissioner's tent and demanded a reduction in the licence fee. In the next month only 400 of the 14 000 diggers who had previously taken out licences renewed them. Fearing revolution, on 30 August the governor announced the abolition of the licence system, with the substitution of an export duty and a small registration fee. Despite this promise both licence and licence fee were continued.

**June** The Legislative Council of NSW appointed a select committee to draw up a new constitution. William Charles Wentworth and Edward Deas Thomson were its most influential members. It recommended the establishment of a general assembly of the Australian colonies to deal with intercolonial questions such as tariffs, railways, lighthouses and postage. The Colonial Office rejected the draft constitution.

**July** An American businessman, Freeman Cobb, in partnership with three other Americans, formed Cobb and Co as a carrying company between Melbourne and Liardet's Beach (Port Melbourne). However, a bad winter made the roads impassable and the venture was abandoned.

**15 August** In a speech to a public meeting in the Victoria Theatre, Sydney, Daniel Deniehy described the proposal of the constitution drafting committee that a NSW upper house should be comprised of titled

**3 August** The first mail steamer, the P & O vessel *Chusan*, arrived in Sydney from England.

**August** S.T. Gill produced 24 sketches, which in 1853 were published in London under the title *Victorian gold diggings and diggers as they are*.

**October** The Amalgamated Society of Engineers was formed in Sydney.

**12 November** George Robertson, Australia's first regular book publisher, arrived in Melbourne. He soon opened premises in Russell St.

**14 December** The secretary of state, Sir John Pakington, informed Lieut-Gov William Thomas Denison in Hobart that the British government had agreed to bow to colonial opinion and that England would not jeopardise its relationship with the colonies by forcing more convicts upon them. No more convicts would be sent to Van Diemen's Land.

**28 December** NSW passed the Gold Fields Management Act, giving legislative force to the 30s monthly licence. Aliens had to pay double that amount. It now became necessary for all people on goldfields to have licences, including traders, publicans and diggers employed by other miners.

**1852** John West's *The history of Tasmania* was published in Launceston. It attacked the transportation system.

**1852** Rev John Dunmore Lang published *Freedom and independence for the golden lands of Australia*. The book pursued Lang's quarrel with the Colonial Office over its immigration policy and expressed his suspicions that the British government was delaying the constitutional advance of the Australian colonies in order to keep them penal settlements.

**1852** Samuel Sydney's *Three colonies of Australia: New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia* was published. It was intended to be a guide to British immigrants and





**1 January 1852** *The first representative legislative council in Tasmania opens. Ludwig Becker, the artist, has included himself in the picture, on the far right, and identifies others, including the Speaker, Sir Richard Dry (standing, centre). Pen and ink, pencil and white, 1852.*

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members of a hereditary nobility as a scheme to create a 'bunyip aristocracy'.

**August** The *Mary Ann*, a small wooden steamer, became the first riverboat on the Murray River.

**28 September** A select committee of the Legislative Council of Van Diemen's Land charged with drafting a new constitution recommended a bicameral legislature. The majority of council members accepted the proposal.

**29 September** The Legislative Council of SA passed a bill to establish a bicameral legislature for SA with a legislative council of no fewer than 12 members nominated by the crown and a house of assembly of 36 members elected by the male inhabitants. The bill was refused royal assent because its provision limiting the crown's right of disallowance of bills was considered in excess of the power conferred by the 1850 Australian Colonies Government Act.

**29 September** John Fairfax, the proprietor of the *Sydney Morning Herald*, bought out his partner Charles Kemp and took his own son, Charles, into partnership.

**1 October** In NSW the gold licence was reduced to 10s per annum, payable only by persons actually digging for gold.

**December** The Goldfields Management Act in Vic was amended, making it more restrictive. Licences were increased to £1 per month or £2, £4 or £8 for three, six and twelve months. Storekeepers now had to pay a £50 annual licence and fines for non-payment of licence fees were raised.

**December** The British order-in-council that had made Van Diemen's Land a penal colony was revoked.

**1853** For the first time export earnings from gold exceeded those from wool.

## 1854

**30 January** Freeman Cobb converted his carrying business Cobb and Co to a coach firm. Initially he operated passenger services between Forest Creek (Castlemaine), Bendigo and Melbourne in each direction daily except on Sunday.

**3 March** The first electric telegraph line in Australia was opened between Melbourne and Williamstown (Port Phillip Bay). Within three years Vic was webbed by a network of overhead telegraph lines.

**1 May** In NSW Henry Parkes won a Sydney seat in the legislative council recently vacated by his archenemy William Charles Wentworth. The colony's radicals and liberals took his replacement of Wentworth and his defeat of the conservative Charles Kemp as a symbolic censure of the recently passed Constitution Act.

**6 May** Charles Joseph La Trobe sailed for England. He had submitted his resignation as lieutenant-governor of Vic in December 1852.

**22 June** Sir Charles Hotham took office as lieutenant-governor of Vic. His title changed to 'governor' on 22 June 1855.

**1 July** William Wilkins was appointed inspector and superintendent of national schools by the NSW Board of National Education. He headed an inquiry into education in NSW which in December 1855 advocated a unified system of schools rather than the dual national and denominational system.

**10 July** A party under the command of Robert Austin left Mombekine, 22 kilometres NNE of Northam, to explore the northwest interior of WA. In the Mt Kennedy–Mt Magnet region, Austin was certain he had found 'one of the finest goldfields in the world'.

**18 August** A day of fasting, humiliation and prayer was proclaimed in Sydney in imitation of such a day proclaimed in England to pray for victory in the Crimean War. Governors in the other Australian colonies issued similar proclamations.

**12 September** The first public steam railway in Australia was opened between Melbourne and Port Melbourne.

**September** Vic experienced a recession. Because of a serious deficit in government finances, Hotham increased goldmining licence inspections from monthly to twice weekly. The colony was experiencing a glut of goods, falling prices and the failure of many businesses. Banks clamped down on credit because of dwindling reserves. There was a decline in gold production, wages fell sharply and there was high unemployment.

**17 October** The daily Melbourne *Age* began publication.

**31 October** The Van Diemen's Land Constitution Act received royal assent, making it the first colonial constitution act to be passed. It provided for a bicameral legislature — an upper house of 15 members and a house of assembly of 30 elected members.



**11 November** Ballarat miners formed the Ballarat Reform League to protest against the licensing system for miners, their lack of voting rights and particularly the acquittal of James Bentley, the proprietor of the Eureka Hotel, whom they believed had murdered the miner James Scobie. The miners were not satisfied with Bentley's eventual conviction for manslaughter or by Hotham's promise of a royal commission into conditions on the goldfields.

**3 December** Four hundred police and troops raided the Eureka stockade, built by miners at Ballarat in November to resist the government's attempts to enforce the licensing system and to make a stand against the injustices they felt they suffered. There were 150 miners in the stockade that morning; 5 soldiers and 30 diggers were killed and 100 prisoners taken. Rewards were set for the apprehension of the leaders Peter Lalor, George Black and Frederic Vern.

**December** After protests from the Melbourne public condemning government action concerning the miners, the colonial secretary, J.F.L. Foster, resigned.

**1854** Gold rushes occurred in Vic at Avoca, Maryborough, Tarrangower (Maldon) and Ararat, where one of the colony's richest strikes was made in 1855.

## 1855

**8 January** Sir Henry Edward Fox Young took up office as governor of Van Diemen's Land, replacing Sir William Denison.

**20 January** Sir William Denison was appointed governor of NSW and governor-general of NSW, Van Diemen's Land, Vic, SA and WA, replacing Sir Charles FitzRoy.

**March** The Vic Royal Commission into the State of the Goldfields recommended the abolition of the licence system and substitution of an annual miner's right of £1 which could be used as legal evidence of occupation of a claim and which carried with it the right to vote in elections for the legislature.

**4 April** The first war vessel built in Australia, the 60-ton armed ketch *Spitfire*, was launched in Sydney.

**14 May** A branch of the Royal Mint was opened in Sydney.

**8 June** Sir Richard Graves MacDonnell took office as governor of SA, replacing Sir Henry Young.

**June** The Gold Export Act was passed in Vic, substituting an export duty of 2s 6d per ounce for the mining licence as the main means of revenue. The



**December 1854** Police and troops attack the Ballarat miners' stockade at the Eureka diggings. Watercolour by J.B. Henderson, who was on the spot a few hours after the event.

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Gold Fields Act was also passed, instituting the 'miners' right' as legal evidence of occupation of a claim. Goldfields courts were also created. Members were to be selected from among the diggers and elected by them every six months. In 1857 similar measures were enacted in NSW.

**June** In Vic an act was passed restricting the number of male adult Chinese any one ship could land and imposing on all such persons an entry tax of £10. The act further required that Chinese immigrants on the goldfields should be confined to well-segregated villages under the control of official salaried protectors. Many Chinese avoided the landing tax by disembarking at Port Adelaide, SA, and walking to the goldfields. The act was the first attempt in Australia to legislate against Chinese immigration. By 1888, all other Australian colonies had passed discriminatory acts against the Chinese or against non-whites in general.

**16 July** The NSW Constitution Act received royal assent. It established a bicameral legislature with the power to make laws for the peace, welfare and good government of the colony. The act was not popular in all quarters because of its conservatism. For example, the legislative council was to be nominated by the governor advised by the executive council; and the legislative assembly was to be elected according to property or income qualifications for five-year terms. The act specified that taxation and appropriation bills were to originate in the assembly; it gave the legislature power to regulate the occupation and sale of crown lands, and power to change the constitution subject to the Australian Colonies Government Act of 1850.

**July** The Vic Constitution Act received royal assent. The legislative council consisted of 30 members elected by colonists with property or educational qualifications. It could not be dissolved and members retired on rotation — five every second year, with vacancies to be filled in subsequent elections. A legislative assembly of 60 members was elected for five years under less stringent property qualifications than those required for council elections. All tax bills were to originate in the legislative assembly and could be rejected but not altered by the council.

**15 August** The Legislative Council of SA elected in 1851 was dissolved by proclamation to be recreated, partly by nomination and partly by election, to draft a new constitution.

**26 September** The first public railway line in NSW opened in Sydney from Redfern to Parramatta Junction.

**September** The Operative Stonemasons' Society in NSW became the first union to win an eight-hour day and 48-hour week. Although other unions in NSW were slow to follow, several Vic unions achieved the eight-hour day in 1856.

**2 October** The river-steamer *Albury* reached Albury from Goolwa, SA, a distance of nearly 3000 kilometres.

**29 October** NSW and Vic jointly proclaimed free trade across the Murray River. The proclamation took effect on 1 November.

**1855** The Theatre Royal was built in Melbourne by goldfields carrier John Black for £95 000. Lola Montez was among the artists Black engaged.

**1855–56** Augustus Charles Gregory led an expedition to search for Ludwig Leichhardt. Starting from the Victoria River he crossed the NT to Qld's Gulf Country and then trekked south to Port Curtis. The party crossed 8000 kilometres in four months.

## 1856

**1 January** The name 'Tasmania', honouring Abel Tasman, the Dutch navigator, was officially adopted to replace Van Diemen's Land which was felt to have too many convict connotations.

**February** The Adelaide-to-Port Adelaide semaphore line was opened by the SA government. A private line between Adelaide and Port Adelaide had been in operation for some weeks.

**19 March** The Vic Electoral Act introduced the secret or 'Australian' ballot. The act provided that printed ballot papers initialled by the deputy returning officers were to be provided to voters, who then crossed out the names of those for whom they did not want to vote, and placed them in the voting box. The secret ballot was introduced into SA in April 1856, Tas and NSW in 1858, Qld in 1859 and WA in 1877.

**11 April** At a public meeting in Melbourne Dr Thomas Embling coined the slogan 'eight hours labour, eight hours recreation, eight hours rest'.

**21 April** Following action by the stonemasons and building trades, major demonstrations were held in Melbourne by unions that had resolved as of 24 March not to work for anyone who did not recognise the eight-hour day.



**26 March 1856** Cricket teams from Victoria and New South Wales meet in intercolonial competition for the first time at the Melbourne Cricket Ground, Richmond. The artist has treated the subject more as a social event than a match: underneath the sketch he notes that included in the foreground is the family of Commissary-General Cotsworthy. Watercolour by J.B. Henderson, c1856.

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1856 *The first steam-operated railway in South Australia was completed on 21 April. The line crossed the Torrens and connected Adelaide with Port Adelaide. Henry Glover's watercolour, painted in 1856, depicts the first train crossing the bridge over the Torrens.*

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**21 April** The first railway in SA was opened between Adelaide (North Terrace) and Port Adelaide. The track was 12 kilometres long.

**12 May** In Vic many unions of skilled tradesmen held celebrations for the achievement of the eight-hour day. Thousands marched through the streets of Melbourne behind a red, white and blue banner with the eight-hour day slogan, and a fete and dinner were held at Cremorne Gardens. The celebration became an annual event.

**22 May** The first parliament of NSW, consisting of a legislative council and legislative assembly, was opened by the governor William Denison, with Stuart Alexander Donaldson as premier.

**June** One hundred and ninety-four descendants of the *Bounty* mutineers, the entire population of Pitcairn Island, were resettled on Norfolk Island, the last convict having been withdrawn.

**August** The first intercolonial conference was held to deal with the maintenance of lighthouses.

**25 October** The South Australian Constitution Act was proclaimed. It made provision for two elective houses authorised to make laws for the peace, order and good government of the colony. All appropriation and revenue bills were to originate in the house of assembly.

**25 November** The first parliament of Vic, consisting of a legislative council and legislative assembly, was opened, with William Clark Haines as premier.

**2 December** The first parliament of Tas, consisting of a legislative council and legislative assembly, was opened, with William Thomas Napier Champ as premier.

## 1857

**12 March** Gas was first used to light the streets of Hobart.

**26 March** John Price, a penal administrator with a reputation for cruelty to the convicts within his jurisdiction, visited Williamstown, Vic, to investigate complaints about rations for convicts employed there on public works. He was surrounded by a group of convicts and battered so severely that he died of his injuries the next afternoon. Fifteen convicts were committed for trial for his murder and seven were subsequently hanged.

**5 April** Part of the Great Northern Railway from Honeysuckle Point (Newcastle) to East Maitland was opened.

**22 April** The first parliament of SA, consisting of a legislative council and legislative assembly, was opened, with Boyle Travers Finniss as premier.

**4 July** Racial violence broke out when a small mob of European diggers on the Ovens goldfields drove the Chinese down the Buckland valley and wrecked or burned tents, a Chinese grocery and joss houses.

**25 July** Perth became a cathedral city on the appointment of Mathew Blagden Hale, formerly an archdeacon of SA, as the first Church of England bishop in WA.

**July** The Vic Land League assembled a land convention, formed of 89 delegates, at public meetings in Vic. It proposed the right to select land before it was surveyed and the abolition of pastoral occupation replaced by free grazing on crown land. A NSW land league was formed in the same year.